

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 TEL AV 00243 131440Z

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R 131347Z JAN 75

FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5210

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBSSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBSSY DAMASCUS

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM JERUSALEM

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEL AVIV 0243

E.O.11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, IS, JO

SUBJECT: BEGIN'S "PEACE PLAN" HIGHLIGHTS OPENING OF HERUT

(LIKUD) CONVENTION AT KIRYAT ARBA

REF: JERUSALEM 0038

1. SUMMARY: OPENING OF HERUT (LIKUD) 12TH ANNUAL CONVENTION AT KIRYAT ARBA NEAR HEBRON JANUARY 12 UNDERSCORED OPPOSITION OF ISRAELI RIGHTWING TO WITHDRAWAL FROM ANY PART OF WEST BANK. PRESIDENT KATZIR REBUFFED LEFTWING PROTEST AGAINST HIS PARTICIPATION AND FURTHER POLITICIZED EVENT IN HIS INTRODUCTORY REMARKS. HERUT LEADER BEGIN OUTLINED HIS "PEACE PLAN" CALLING FOR THREE YEAR TRUCE AND DIRECT NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN ARAB STATES AND ISRAEL. END SUMMARY.

2. HERUT(LIKUD) IN SYMBOLIC ACT UNDERLINING ITS COMMITMENT TO PERMANENT ISRAELI PRESENCE ON WEST BANK, HELD OPENING SESSION OF ITS 12TH ANNUAL CONVENTION IN KIRYAT ARBA NEAR HEBRON JANUARY 12(REMAINDER OF SESSIONS ARE TO BE HELD IN TEL AVIV). IN ADDITION TO HERUT LEADERSHIP, PROMINENT INVITEES FROM BROAD SPECTRUM OF ISRAELI ESTABLISHMENT INCLUDED PRESIDENT KATZIR, FORMER MINISTERS DAYAN AND SAPIR, TWO CHIEF RABBIS, PERES(ON BEHALF OF GOI) AS WELL AS LEADERS

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PAGE 02 TEL AV 00243 131440Z

OF OTHER LIKUD PARTIES AND NATIONAL RELIGIOUS PARTY.

3. APART FROM ACT ITSELF OF CONVENING POLITICAL CONVENTION IN WEST BANK, MOST CONTROVERSIAL ASPECT OF EVENT WAS DECISION OF PRESIDENT KATZIR TO ATTEND CEREMONY. KATZIR TOLD LEFTWING PROTEST GROUP(MOKED) THAT HIS PARTICIPATION WAS CONSISTENT WITH PRACTICE OF OTHER ISRAELI PRESIDENTS TO ACCEPT INVITATIONS FROM ALL MAJOR ISRAELI POLITICAL PARTIES TO ATTEND CONVENTIONS, ETC. MOKED, , PROTESTERS, ASSERTED THAT KATZIR'S PARTICIPATION CONSTITUTED UNNECESSARY OFFENSE TO ARABS AT PARTICULARLY SENSITIVE TIME IN ISRAELI-ARAB NEGOTIATIONS, AND ALSO CLAIMED THAT PRESIDENT COULD NOT TRAVEL OUTSIDE ISRAEL PROPER IN HIS OFFICIAL CAPACITY WITHOUT GOI APPROVAL(WHICH HAD NOT BEEN SOLICITED).

4. KATZIR'S INTRODUCTORY REMARKS INCLUDED REFERENCE TO ARAB-ISRAELI STRIFE IN HEBRON AREA. QUOTE YOUR CONVENTION MEETS IN REVIVED KIRYAT ARBA. FACING HEBRON--ESTABLISHED CLOSE TO 4,000 YEARS AGO. AND ONE OF THE HOLIEST OF THE CITIES IN THE LAND OF ISRAEL. IT IS A GOOD FEELING FOR A JEW TO RETURN TO REGIONS OF THE LAND FROM WHICH WE WERE UPROOTED BY FORCE--TO RETURN WITH THE OFFER OF PEACE. END QUOTE.

5. HERUT LEADER MENAHEM BEGIN'S KEYNOTE ADDRESS WAS THINLY VIELED ATTACK ON US FOREIGN POLICY AND ALSO AGAINST GOI LEADERSHIP FOR ACCEPTING US STAGE APPROACH TO NEGOTIATIONS. BEGIN, CITING FOREIGN AND ISRAELI REPORTING, CLAIMED THAT WARNINGS CONCERNING DANGER OF RENEWED WAR IF ISRAEL DID NOT AGREE TO FURTHER WITHDRAWALS REPRESENTED "A TYPICAL SYSTEM OF MUNICH PRESSURE."

6. BEGIN OUTLINED HIS OWN "PEACE PLAN" INVOLVING A) THREE-YEAR CEASE FIRE, B) DIRECT NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN ISRAEL AND ARAB STATES, C) AND MUTUAL RECOGNITION OF SOVEREIGNTY AND INDEPENDENCE OF NEGOTIATING PARTNERS. BEGIN SAID HIS TRUCE PROPOSAL WOULD APPLY NOT ONLY TO REGULAR ARMIES BUT TO "ANY FORCE OR ORGANIZATION BEARING ARMS". NEGOTIATIONS COULD BE HELD EITHER ALTERNATELY IN JERUSALEM AND ARAB CAPITALS, OR IN NEUTRAL EUROPEAN LOCATION.

7. IN ATTACKING GOI, BEGIN CHARACTERIZED IT AS WEAKEST  
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PAGE 03 TEL AV 00243 131440Z

GOVERNMENT SINCE FOUNDATION OF STATE, ADDED THAT ITS LEADERS WERE NOSELECTED BY PEOPLE (SINCE ELECTORAL LISTS WERE HEADED BY DIFFERENT LEADERSHIP SLATE) AND ISSUED CALL FOR NATIONAL ELECTION THIS SPRING.

8. COMMENT: PARTICIPATION OF PRESIDENT KATZIR AND OTHER NOTABLES, INCLUDING RAFI LEADERS PERES AND DAYAN, WILL CERTAINLY REINFORCE IMPRESSION OF ARABS AND OTHERS THAT

ISRAELIS ARE DETERMINED TO HOLD ON TO WEST BANK. HERUT CONVENTION, WHICH OTHERWISE WOULD HAVE BEEN RELATIVELY INSIGNIFICANT DOMESTIC POLITICAL EVENT, HAS THUS BECOME A GESTURE OF DEFIANCE IN WEB OF ARAB-ISRAELI RELATIONS. BEGIN'S PEACE PLAN STRIKES US AS COMPLETE "NON-STARTER" INTENDED PRIMARILY TO EMPHASIZE HERUT'S OPPOSITION TO US MEDIATION EFFORT AND GOI FOREIGN POLICY.  
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